

# FAQs - Proposed Scheme Amendment No.199 - Recoding from 'Residential (R15)' to 'Residential (R20)' – Safety Bay and Shoalwater

## What is a Scheme Amendment?

A Scheme Amendment is a formal change to a local government's Town Planning Scheme No.2 (also known as a Local Planning Scheme), which is the statutory document that guides land use and development within a local area.

## What does 'R15' and 'R20' mean?

R15 and R20 are residential density codes established under the Western Australian Residential Design Codes (R-Codes). R-Codes determine the minimum and average lot sizes for subdivision and guide the number of dwellings that may be developed on a property.

An R20 Code provides greater subdivision and redevelopment opportunities than R15, subject to design, connection to sewer and site-specific constraints. The key differences between the two density codes are outlined below.

| Density Code | Minimum Lot Size  | Average Lot Size  | Subdivision and Development Potential                                                                                                   |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| R15          | 580m <sup>2</sup> | 666m <sup>2</sup> | Very limited - only very large lots exceeding 1,332m <sup>2</sup> can meet the average requirement                                      |
| R20          | 350m <sup>2</sup> | 450m <sup>2</sup> | Moderate - lots exceeding 900m <sup>2</sup> can typically subdivide; in some cases, lots between 700-900m <sup>2</sup> may also qualify |

## Does every property becoming R20 gain subdivision potential?

No - While the Scheme Amendment may create additional opportunities, subdivision potential depends on many factors, including:

- Lot size;
- Lot dimensions;
- Existing dwelling location;
- Easements (such as sewer, drainage or rights-of-way);
- Sewer and servicing arrangements;
- Access requirements; and

- Compliance with State planning policies.

### **Why are some R15 properties excluded from the amendment?**

Some R15 Code properties are located within areas identified by the City's Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Plan ([CHRMAP](#)) as being at risk from long-term coastal hazards such as erosion, inundation and sea-level rise. The CHRMAP identifies certain coastal areas of Safety Bay and Shoalwater for a future adaptation response known as 'managed retreat', which involves limiting further intensification of development in locations where long-term coastal risks are expected to increase over time.

To remain consistent with the CHRMAP and State coastal planning objectives, properties located within these managed retreat areas are proposed to remain R15 and are excluded from the amendment.

If you have received a letter from the City of Rockingham on this Scheme Amendment you are not within these managed retreat areas.

### **How can I find out if my property is proposed to be recoded to R20?**

A map showing all affected properties will be available:

- On the City's website;
- At the City's Administration Building; and
- As part of the public advertising documentation.

The owners of properties proposed to be recoded from R15 to R20 will also receive written notification.

### **How could future State Government R-Codes reforms affect the proposed R20 coding?**

The State Government is currently undertaking a separate review of the R-Codes and has announced proposed reforms aimed at increasing housing supply and simplifying subdivision requirements. One of the proposed changes is the removal of the current average lot size requirement for land coded R20 and below, leaving only the minimum lot size requirement to determine subdivision potential. If implemented, this could allow some R20-coded lots that are 700m<sup>2</sup> in size to be subdivided, whereas an R20 lot of approximately 900m<sup>2</sup> is generally required under the current provisions.

It is important to note that these reforms are proposals only and have not yet been finalised. The City is assessing Scheme Amendment No.199 based on the R-Codes currently in force. Any future changes to the R-Codes would be determined by the State Government and would apply across Western Australia, not just Safety Bay and Shoalwater.

For further information please use the following website links:

## [Planning code reforms to unlock infill housing opportunities | Western Australian Government](#)

### [Residential Design Codes Review](#)

#### **What are the next steps for the proposed Scheme Amendment?**

Following the close of the public advertising period, all submissions received will be reviewed and summarised in a Schedule of Submissions, which will be considered by Council alongside the proposed Scheme Amendment.

After considering the submissions, Council may resolve to:

- Adopt the Scheme Amendment, with or without modifications; or
- Not proceed with the Scheme Amendment.

If Council resolves to adopt the Scheme Amendment, the proposal will be forwarded to the Western Australian Planning Commission and the Minister for Planning for final consideration and determination. The Amendment will only come into effect once it has received all required State Government approvals and is published in the Government Gazette.

#### **What if the R20 Code requirements change later?**

If the proposed Scheme Amendment is approved and a property is coded R20, any future changes to the R-Codes introduced by the State Government would generally apply automatically to that land. This means that the future development and subdivision potential of R20 coded properties could change over time if the State Government amends the R-Codes.

Based on the reforms announced to date, any changes that may increase subdivision opportunities would only apply to land that is coded R20 (or another applicable residential density code). Accordingly, for affected properties to potentially benefit from any future R-Code reforms, the proposed R20 coding would first need to be approved through Scheme Amendment No.199 and come into effect.

#### **When can I apply to subdivide?**

Subdivision applications cannot be lodged on the basis of the proposed R20 coding unless and until Scheme Amendment No.199 receives all required approvals and is published in the Government Gazette.

If the Scheme Amendment is ultimately approved and gazetted, landowners may then lodge a subdivision application with the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC). Any subdivision application would be assessed against the planning framework, R-Code provisions and subdivision requirements that are in effect at the time the application is determined. Approval of the Scheme Amendment does not guarantee that a property can be subdivided, as subdivision potential will continue to depend on factors such as lot size, lot configuration, access arrangements, servicing and compliance with the applicable planning requirements.